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ARE "TEMPERANCE" AND "TOTAL ABSTINENCE" CONFLICTING PRINCIPLES?

By Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc.

THERE are two entirely different sides from which Temperance work can be approached—so different that the very principles and standards of action in them are entirely divergent.

First, there is the appeal which is made to individual persons, the endeavour to help or save the tempted or the fallen, and to induce others to avoid temptation. This is the work to which the ordinary Temperance Society or Band of Hope devotes itself. It is easy to talk about this work, easier still to sneer at it, easiest of all politely to ignore it, as the majority of members of our Churches do. It is not easy, but unspeakably hard, really to do the work. But I do not speak of this work for the sake of enlarging on its difficulties, but for the sake of pointing out with the utmost emphasis that in this work the total abstinence basis is essential.

This work has nothing whatever to do with any political or public questions; it is just an endeavour to do good to those whom we can reach and to save them from danger. And the only way to be entirely safe from that danger is to abstain entirely from the thing from which the danger arises. If any persons are blind to that danger, it is a wilful blindness—the blindness of those who will not see how rare a thing is real self-control, and how quickly the bonds of habit become as strong as bands of steel which the man has riveted round himself; and how, for very many of our brothers and sisters, the only choice is between total abstinence and disastrous excess.

A man need not even be a member of any Temperance Society to engage in this work. If he can influence even one person needing help, he is a Temperance Reformer; and his reform will consist in persuading such a one not to be a "moderate drinker," but to abstain.

All this is the work of particular per-

sons and particular societies. But, besides this and apart from it, there is the work which can only be done by concerted action on a large scale—by municipalities, by councils, by legislation, all with the aim of decreasing the inducements to excessive drinking and regulating the drink traffic so that it may be as little of an evil as possible. In this, the rigid total abstinence basis is as much out of place as it is essential in the appeal to individual persons. In this, abstainers and non-abstainers—in fact, all reasonable beings, ought to be able to work together.

One great obstacle to the successful carrying out of this large public action is the attitude of what is called the "Temperance Party." So long as this party will act only on one assumption—that any consumption of alcoholic drinks is a sin, and that absolute prohibition, complete legislative suppression of the liquor traffic, is the only thing to be aimed at—so long will this party continue to be as ineffective as it now is.

THE GENTLEST ART.

By W. J. Baxter, B.A.

ANGLING has been a "gentle art" ever since that fine May morning when Mr. Piscator stretched his legs up Tottenham Hill, and now Mr. E. V. Lucas has given us "the gentlest art" in "a choice of letters by entertaining hands," forming a companion volume to his "Open Road" and "Friendly Town." We are sometimes told that letter-writing is a lost art. The pessimist probably errs here, as elsewhere, by over-statement. But while all modern correspondents are not like the prudent attorney who ended his love letters, "yours, without prejudice," there can be no doubt that the rush and hurry of the twentieth century are not congenial to those undress, easy-chair musings which gave us the divine chit-chat of Cowper. The days when little Miss Jessamine disappeared on the dragoon's black charger have gone for ever, and, with them, something undefinable that we are wont to associate with letters in the era of franks, post-boys, and stage-coaches. As in life, so in literature, the old order changes: we have not a Cowper but we have Stevenson and Fitzgerald. The difficulty of getting a proper perspective of our own times gives rise to ill-considered judgments, and the human mind is now, as ever, sensible of "the wondrous charm of antiquity"—while the halo of romance surrounds the distant hills we wander in present scenes like so many Peter Bells. The fifth chapter of "Cranford" is, perhaps, the best commentary ever written on "the gentlest art." Miss Matty brings out all the old family letters to destroy such as ought not to be allowed to fall into the hands of strangers—she had always shrunk from the task, "with a timid dread of something painful." "We must burn them, I think," she said, "No one will care for them when I am gone." Who can forget that collection, or the explanatory dockets drawn up by Miss Jenkyns in her best Johnsonian style? Surely the "practical remarks on the desirability of keeping warm the extremities of infants" might have been saved from the flames for the instruction and entertainment of posterity! Then, again in this immortal chapter, where tragedy and comedy mingle as in life, what a contrast can we imagine between the short, homely sentences of the rector's love letters and the grand style of his one printed sermon, "published by request;" how naive the docket endorsed by the young wife on a copy of verses written by the rector in one of his "fits of classical poetry"—the good man then being up in London superintending the publication of his sermon, and therefore in the full pride and panoply of authorship. "Hebrew verses," ran the endorsement, "sent me by my honoured husband. I thowt to have had a letter about killing the pig, but must wait." We have also a glimpse of Miss Jenkyns's letters in which the words gathered size like snowballs, and, towards the end, became "quite sesquipedalian." One is reminded of the Swan of Lichfield and her rolling periods, which seem to have irritated Macaulay. "What language is that?"—"what can she mean?"—

" was ever such pedantry found in company with such ignorance?" so run some of the historian's marginal comments on Miss Seward's letters. A much less exacting critic than Macaulay might well be pardoned for cutting up a correspondence describing a country house as "an Edenic Villa in a bloomy garden." It is only fair to add, however, that the great man made ample amends when he came on passages free from such turgid nonsense — see Sir George Trevelyan's recent book—and the Swan ultimately fared much better than Mr. "Satan" Montgomery.

What is the essence of a good letter? James Howell said, "We should write as we speak," and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu came still nearer the root of the matter. "I have a constancy," she writes, "in my nature that makes me always remember my old friends." Better far, however, for each of us to turn to Mr. Lucas's delightful volume and evolve our own theories. Ample material abounds there from the first efforts of Marjorie Fleming, to the gay, polished banter of Walpole and Sydney Smith, from the caustic epigrams of Carlyle to the quiet dignity of Sir William Napier as he tells Lady Hester Stanhope the story of his life. Mr. Lucas does not include Johnson's letter to Lord Chesterfield, but the rout of the Patron can never be forgotten, any more than the truth underly ng Walpole's cynical declaration that "he had never yet seen or heard anything serious that was not ridiculous"—a profound truth surely, if we smile as did Shakespeare, Cervantes and Montaigne at the solemn vanities of life. We may thus realise the influence of the letter on Literature when, in fulness of time, such treasures pass from their first possessors to become a heritage of humaniy.

The Land of Life.

There was a land renowned in Erin's story,
So an old saga saith,
A land of life whose crowning joy and glory,
It was to know no death

A land of all delight and sensuous beauty,
With but one gift denied,
To live for ever was a right and duty,
And no one ever died.

Disease and civil strife and wild disorder,
Which elsewhere ran their race,
Never could pass the sweet enchanted border
Of that blest dwelling place.

No mourning for the lost, no watching by the dying,
In that fair land was known;
No Rachel for her buried children crying,
Sat silent and alone.

Beyond its pale death swept the land as ever,
And graves were multiplied,
Within there were no graves, for never
Had any creature died.

And many pilgrims came to dwell therein,
Some old and scant of breath,
Oft risking life to reach the land wherein
There was no fear of death.

Oh! Paradise of all content and gladness,
Nay, reader, 'twas not so,
For there was sin and all the griefs and sadness
That from our passions flow.

And men grown sick of time that had no measure,
For their last moment sighed,
And death appeared a privilege and pleasure,
But no one ever died.

To know no change but just go on for ever,
Felt like a cruel doom,
And many wished the bond of life to sever,
And end all in the tomb.

And some when soul and sense began to fail,
And life lost all its zest,
Oft begged to be outborne beyond the pale,
To die and be at rest.

Thus pilgrims hastening eager to be there,
Met often passing by,
The living being led by loved ones where
'Twas granted them to die

Oh! Christians singing of a hope immortal,
Why still with death at strife?
Why shudder as ye reach this mystic portal,
That openeth into life?

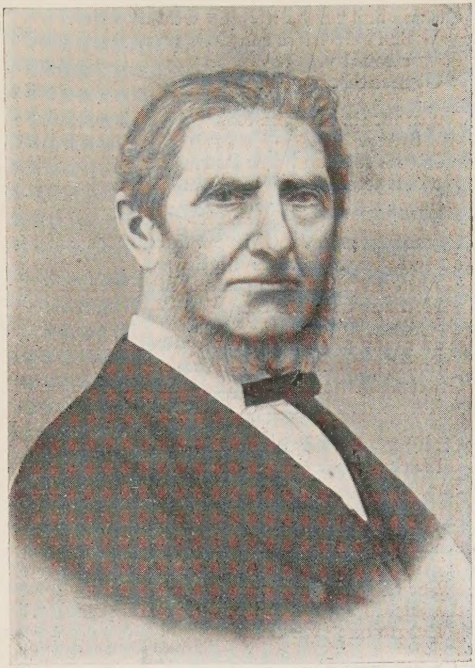
From the old saga let us learn this truth,
To live for ever here
Without the gift of fresh immortal youth,
Were destiny to fear.

In that blest land where dawns eternal morn,
Life is not endless time,
There every day, we shall, with powers newborn,
To loftier prospects climb

Oh! Land of Life for ever young and new,
Not hung upon a breath,
Where nought but what is lovely meets the view,
And there is no more death.

ANON.

WARRENPOINT, *Feb. 2nd, 1908.*



THE REV. C. J. M'ALESTER
(1810—1891).

THE LATE REV. C. J. M'ALESTER AND THE ORPHAN SOCIETY.

By Rev. James Kennedy.

THIS year the Orphan Society of our Church attains its majority, and in thinking of it our minds naturally revert to its founder, whose genial countenance looks from this page. During a long and busy life-time Mr. M'Alester was associated with many useful and benevolent enterprises, forgotten, or liable to be forgotten, like the Benevolent Loan Fund, once in Holywood, of which he was for many years the moving spirit, but for all time to come many a widow and orphan will have good reason to "call him blessed." Many years since, the formation of an Orphan Society was mooted, a plan was drafted and £500 promised by Miss Dunbar, of Banbridge, but owing to unhappy differences of opinion on matters of Church government, the project was abandoned, until a sum of £100, having been handed over by the late Mrs. Brown of Warrenpoint to Mr. M'Alester to be devoted to some Unitarian object, our venerated friend wisely resolved to make it the *nucleus* of a fund for helping the orphans of our Church. For several years he worked indefatigably in the interests of the Society then formed and chiefly as its secretary. He was warmly supported by our Church generally, and it is a matter of thankfulness to God, and affectionate remembrance to Mr. M'Alester, that we have an Institution so thriving and so helpful as it is to-day.

It may not be out of place under the circumstances to refer to some facts and incidents in Mr. M'Alester's life and career. Born in Belfast, the only son of a cotton manufacturer, he lost his father when only a few months old. Of his father it was recorded in the local press of the day that "he was a man of gentle manners and strict integrity, a steady patriot and an earnest friend." His mother was a Miss Wightman, daughter of a Lisburn damask manufacturer, of whom also the local newspaper stated that "he was not only sincerely regretted by his immediate connexions, but also that his loss would be severely felt" by a numerous class of manufacturing poor to whom he afforded constant and liberal employment. In view of such a parentage the motto *noblesse oblige* will naturally suggest itself. Mr. M'Alester received his elementary education in Lisburn, where his mother and he with his two sisters took up their abode after his father's death. Subsequently he attended the Arts and Divinity Classes in the Old College, now the Royal Academical Institution, distinguishing himself in his classes, and finally obtaining with honours, the general certificate, the equivalent of the M.A. Degree in Glasgow and other Universities. He studied in preparation for the Ministry of the Presbyterian Church, and during his undergraduate course was connected with Dr. Morgan's congregation, and was a teacher in Fisherwick Place Sunday School. But when subscription to the Westminster Confession came to be enforced on all Licentiates as a condition of admission to the ministry of

the Synod of Ulster, Mr. M'Alester severed his connection with that body and cast in his lot with the Non-Subscribers. The influence of his old pastor, and subsequently father-in-law, Mr. Craig of Lisburn, operating directly and coming also through a gentler medium inclined him to liberalism in religion, as Mr. Craig himself had been influenced in the direction of Unitarianism by the celebrated Dr. Black of Dromore, and afterwards of Derry. Besides he had been a listener to the discussion between Rev. J. Scott Porter and Dean Bagot, and this with a perusal of Channing's works completed his conversion to Unitarianism.

At the age of 24 he received 'calls' almost simultaneously from the newly established congregation of Ballymoney, and the congregation of Holywood. Naturally he accepted the invitation from Holywood, and there he laboured for the remainder of his life, though called also some years after to Islington, London, as also to Banbridge and to Dromore. In 1849 Mr. M'Alester was stricken by cholera, but providentially he recovered to prove himself a true minister of Him "who took our infirmities and bare our diseases." It was supposed by the poorer people that government medical men were paid according to the number of deaths that occurred, and so the services of these gentlemen were refused. Through illness and other causes Mr. M'Alester chanced to be the only minister in Holywood whose services were available, and so he obtained and administered the proper remedies to the sufferers of three congregations, and in many cases where death supervened he coffined the mortal remains with his own hands.

In addition to conducting a private seminary for several years, where many of the leading merchants of Belfast were educated, our friend was trustee, manager and secretary of the Sullivan Primary and High Schools in Holywood, was prominent and active in all the Institutions connected with his own denomination, editor of more than one publication, director of the Presbyterian Widows' Fund, and following in the footsteps of his theological professor, Dr. Edgar, he was a warm advocate of Temperance, and a vice-president of the Irish Temperance League. But the child of his old age and perhaps the most dearly beloved by him, was the Orphan Society of which he may justly be regarded as the Father. Certainly while strength remained he devoted himself to its interests with unflagging zeal, and in view of advancing years with surprising energy. The appearance in our pulpits "of the old man eloquent" was always hailed with delight by old and young. His sermons were carefully written out but never read or even referred to in the course of delivery, which was always free, graceful and impressive, devout and reverent, whether in prayer, reading or preaching a model of what pulpit oratory should be; and in private life who more cheery and mirth provoking, his quips and cranks prevailing to the last, but never leaving a sting behind. His life was indeed a strenuous one, yet again and again in his latter years he declared how happy it had been.

From many points of view, *his* lot may have been exceptionally fortunate. Yet notwithstanding our many difficulties as ministers arising from the unpopularity of our faith, the narrowness of our means, the peculiar temperament of our people, always on the defensive yet somehow wanting in *esprit de corps*, the sect everywhere spoken against, and only too often speaking against each other and against their ministers, still if we have the cheery heart and purpose strong of our much loved friend who has gone before, our lives will not all be altogether a barrenness, and many a joy will come, though we may not all stand so high in public esteem as did Mr. M'Alester, who, on his jubilee in 1884, was entertained in Holywood Town Hall, laymen and ministers of different denominations attending, and joining with the congregation in offering their hearty congratulations along with address, a purse of sovereigns and a silver salver; and none more genial than the parish priest, the learned antiquarian, Father O'Laverty.

Mr. M'Alester, was born Dec. 21, 1810, and departed this life, August 8, 1891.

REV. JAMES DRUMMOND, LL.D., Litt.D., D.D., Oxford.

DR. JAMES DRUMMOND.

THE recent visit of the Rev. Dr. James Drummond to Belfast, where he occupied the pulpit of All Souls' Church for four Sundays, has suggested that a brief account of the life-work of this extremely able scholar will be of interest to the readers of this Magazine. With All Souls' Church, Dr. Drummond has a double, though indirect connection, as son of a former minister of this church, and father of their present minister.

He was born in May, 1835, in Dublin, and was the son of the Rev. William Hamilton Drummond, D.D., M.R.I.A., previously minister of the Church of the Second Congregation, Belfast, and at that time minister of Strand Street Meeting House, Dublin. After graduating in Trinity College, Dublin, with very high honours in Classics, Mr. Drummond entered (in 1856) as a theological student in Manchester New College, London (now Manchester College, Oxford). At that time the College was under the principalship of Rev. J. J. Tayler, author of the well-known volume, *A Retrospect of Religious Life in England*. Dr. James Martineau was Professor of Philosophy, and Dr. G. Vance Smith of Hebrew and Old Testament Literature. It will be remembered that Dr. G. V. Smith was the one Unitarian invited to take part in the work of revising the "Authorised Version" of the Scriptures.

In 1859, Mr. Drummond was invited to Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, as Colleague of the Rev. William Gaskell (husband of Mrs. Gaskell, the novelist). He began his ministry there with the new year, 1860. In 1869, after the death of the Rev. J. J. Tayler, Mr. Drummond was invited to succeed him in his professorship, and he began his duties in January, 1870, under the principalship of Dr. Martineau. Here, for thirty-five years, he set before the students, as they succeeded one another in the work of the College years, a high ideal of exact and careful scholarship, and made the true spiritual meaning of the Christian Religion appeal alike to their thought and their feeling. His eminent services to scholarship have won world-wide recognition. Twice he has been the recipient of Degrees from his own University in Dublin, since he first graduated there. In 1882, he received the Degree of LL.D., and ten years later, at the Tercentenary of the University, the Honorary Degree of Litt. D. In 1885, Dr. Drummond succeeded Dr. Martineau in the principalship of Manchester New College, from which he retired two years ago.

Dr. Drummond's published works include, besides several smaller volumes, together with single sermons, College addresses, and articles in journals, the following books which have become standard authorities in their various branches: *The Jewish Messiah*, in 1877; *Philo-Judæus* (a history of the Jewish-Alexandrian Philosophy), 1888; *Via, Veritas, Vita* (the Hibbert Lectures on Christianity), 1894; the biographical

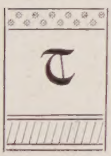
part of the *Life and Letters of James Martineau*, 1902; *Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, 1904; *Studies in Christian Doctrine*, 1908. If one of these books is to be mentioned as of special and pre-eminent value, it is the one on Christian Doctrine. This book will help every thoughtful reader to find his way amid the jingle and jangle of competing theologies, "new" and "old"; and it provides a most able and impressive defence of the Unitarian Faith at its best.

S. H. M.

For the Children.

By Miss Clara M. Patterson.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."



Thomas, the disciple, surnamed Didymus, is the patron saint of builders and architects, and may generally be recognised in any group of the disciples by having a rule, or square, in his hand. Did you ever hear the beautiful legend that accounts for this patronage? It is said that one night Thomas had a vision, in which he was told that the King of the Indies, Gondoforus by name, wanted a palace built which would outshine in magnificence, that of the Roman Emperor, and that he (Thomas) was to offer to build it. This offer, when made, Gondoforus accepted, and gave large sums of gold and silver to Thomas for the building, and then went abroad for two years.

When the King returned, it was in vain that he looked for his fine palace, and when he was told that all the money had been given to the sick and poor, he was *very* angry, and at once had Thomas arrested, meaning to put him to death. The execution, however, was delayed by the death of the King's brother. A few days after, the brother's soul returned, and told King Gondoforus that he had been to Paradise, and there had seen a magnificent palace of gold and precious stones, and he was told that this was the Spiritual Palace, built by Thomas for the King.

Gondoforus straightway acknowledged the faithful stewardship and released Thomas, having learnt the lesson that there is no grandeur like the grandeur of good deeds.

Now, for a moment, let us think of a man who built for himself such a palace of good deeds—a man we are proud to number as one of our household of faith.

John Pounds was the son of a dockman in Portsmouth, born in 1766, he had very little education, and entered the shipyard as an apprentice when only twelve. When fifteen, he had a bad fall into a dry dock, which made him a cripple for life, and it was then that he took to shoemaking and mending, an occupation which suited him in all ways very well.

He worked at his trade for many years, and was a kind neighbour to all, sharing his scanty fare with any who needed it. In 1818, he adopted a little lame nephew, and afterwards cured him by means of a boot which he invented.

It was for this nephew that he first started his "school," teaching the little fellow and one or two neighbour boys to read, write and count. He had such a good way with boys and girls that they loved to go to him, and he gathered in as many of the very poorest children as he had room for—indeed more, for they overflowed to a bench outside. In his little workshop, 18 feet long by 6 feet broad, he had between thirty and forty children, all as busy and happy as possible, while the old cobbler worked at his shoes and taught them at the same time.

He kept this school for more than twenty years, and gave hundreds of boys all the education they ever got, and his own good life and simple trust in God exercised an immeasurable power for good in the slums of Portsmouth. John Pounds died very suddenly in the middle of his work, aged 72. He is known now as the Founder of Ragged Schools, and the "John Pounds Ragged Schools," and "John Pounds Library," at Portsmouth, bear his name,

which is universally known and honoured. It has been said that if he could come back to earth now to find himself so famous he would say—"This can't be me they're talking of so, it must be another John Pounds. *I* never did great things; I only worked at my trade in my shop in St. Mary's Street, and taught poor children that nobody cared for."

Obituary.

MR. R. H. BAILIE.

All who knew Mr. Bailie were much pained to hear of his sudden and violent death, which it is believed occurred on the night of the 31st of March last. After living for nearly forty years at Summerhill, near Antrim, he retired from farming and went to reside in lodgings at Larne, near which he was born and brought up, and where he had many friends. Latterly he had become imbued with the desire to have a home of his own again, had furnished a house for the purpose, and was sleeping in it alone for the first time on the date mentioned. When his friends entered the next morning, Mr. Bailie was found lying dead at the foot of the stairs, death according to medical opinion, having been instantaneous. His niece had left him at eleven o'clock the previous night, well, and in excellent spirits. At the inquest subsequently held, it was conjectured that he had omitted to attend to some little duty, and in descending the stairs without a light, had stumbled and fallen, and thus met with his death. He was buried at Kilwaughter, three-and-a-half miles from Larne, the Rev. W. S. Smith of Antrim, officiating, the Rev. Jas. Kennedy of Larne, being ill with influenza.

Mr. Bailie being highly esteemed by the members, a most regular attendant at the services, and a generous supporter of the congregation at Antrim, his removal from thence, in 1899, was felt to be a great loss. In everything that concerned the welfare of the congregation and its minister he took a very deep interest, and consequently did not on removal sever his connection; and so, when settling his worldly affairs, he determined that his death when it occurred, should involve no pecuniary loss. This also was his feeling respecting Larne.

Mr. Bailie was a man of action rather than of words. To speak somewhat enigmatically, one only knew what he would do when it was done. He was often arranging benevolent surprises, and was amply rewarded when they induced pleasure. But these were not the only instances of his generosity. Just before penning these words the writer heard a characteristic story of his beneficence, in connection with the widow and daughters of one of his workers. The woman became ill. Mr. Bailie brought medical aid and every necessary comfort, but without avail. She died and he defrayed the funeral expenses. Some time afterwards one of the daughters was smitten with consumption, both worked in a local factory. Again Mr. Bailie proved the friend in need. After a lingering illness she died, and the funeral and other expenses were defrayed by Mr. Bailie. Then the second daughter took ill, was cared for at Mr. Bailie's request, and when she died, her funeral expenses also were defrayed by the generous friend we now lament. The Ulster Unitarian Association and the Orphan Society received his benevolent aid from the first. Mr. Bailie had reached the age of 75 years. —W. S. S.

REPORTS.

Antrim.—Mr. James S. Hunter, a life-long member of the Old Presbyterian Congregation here, and secretary for more than thirty years, has been honoured by having the Commission of the Peace conferred upon him. Mr. Hunter's many friends are much gratified by the action of the Lord Chancellor.

Crumlin.—The last of a series of very successful popular concerts, promoted by Crumlin Reading Room, was given on the 1st April. The occasion was chosen to pay a well-deserved compliment to the chairman and organiser of the concerts, Rev. W. A. Weatherall. He has been the leading spirit in

the various schemes for the advancement of the room, and has laboured indefatigably and successfully for its welfare. Just before the announcement of the last item on the programme the secretary, on behalf of a few members and friends of the room, presented him with a handsome marble clock as a tangible expression of gratitude and goodwill. The recipient having replied, Miss English and Mr. Manderson gave a tasteful rendering of a duet, and the proceedings terminated with the singing of the National Anthem.

Downpatrick.—The stormy, wet weather on 27th March did not affect the attendance one whit in the Assembly Hall, on the occasion of a festival given by the Band of Hope of the First Presbyterian Non-Subscribing Church, of which Rev. M. S. Dunbar is the esteemed minister. It was not only a large but a very happy gathering over which Mr. S. C. N. Lowry presided, and certainly the expectations of a delightful programme were fully realised. The young people, including some tiny tots, displayed an amazing amount of skill and versatility in their performances, whether in recited story, dramatic representation, or musical sketch. Certainly they did credit to the training they received from Mrs. Dunbar and Miss Porter, who were responsible for organising the entertainment. The programme was prefaced by a number of gramophone selections by Mr. James Dickson. The entertainment consisted of part songs, songs, recitations and various kinds of drill all performed by the children, and we regret that lack of space prevents us from setting out in full the various items of a most interesting programme. Encores were frequent, the audience expressing their appreciation in no unmistakable manner. Miss Porter played the accompaniments in her usual good style, being assisted by Mrs. Dunbar, and the proceedings concluded with the singing of the National Anthem.

Kilwaughter.—On March 17th, the Sunday and Day Schools of the above held high festival in honour of Ireland's Patron Saint. At 6-30 p.m., after singing and prayer, tea, &c. and fruit were distributed to the young people by their teachers Mr. and Mrs. M'Keown, Miss Gledhill and Miss Greenlee, after which the Rev. J. Kennedy took the chair and delivered a short address on St. Patrick. Mr. E. Holmes, Organist of the Old Presbyterian Church of Larne and Kilwaughter, presided at the piano—a splendid new instrument lent for the occasion by Mrs. M'Keown—and performed a solo and rendered the accompaniments during the evening with his usual refinement and skill. The entertainment being largely an Irish one, the young folk gave as the initial item the chorus "The Dear Little Shamrock," which was very delightfully illustrated with lime-light views by Mr. Samuel M. Bailie, who spared neither expense nor energy to make the entertainment the success it undoubtedly was. At intervals there were also given by the scholars, directed as they had been taught by Mr. and Mrs. M'Keown, the choruses: "Let Erin Remember," "The Harp that Once," "Kitty of Coleraine" and "The Angel's Whisper," in a manner reflecting great credit on themselves and their teachers. Mrs. M'Keown sang in her own charming style the song "Come back to Erin," which like the choruses was also very beautifully illustrated by Mr. Bailie. A reading, "Somebody's Mother," was given with much feeling and faultless elocution was given by Miss Gledhill; and Miss Janie Gledhill delighted the audience by rendering the songs "The Meeting of the Waters" and "Violets." Mr. Bailie again favoured the audience with lime-light views of Irish Scenery and some others of a humorous character, Mr. M'Keown reading the connection story. Assisted by Mr. Meharg he gave selections on the phonograph which were appreciated by all. But perhaps the gem of the entertainment lay in the Indian Views also given in lime-light by Mr. Bailie. The spacious schoolroom was crowded to inconvenience, many being unable to gain admission through lack of space. The entertainment concluded with the National Anthem, pictures of their Majesties being shown on the screen.

Mountpottinger.—The newly-formed Choral Society held its first Annual Concert on Thursday evening, 2nd April, in Albertbridge Hall, when

a large audience enjoyed a most excellent programme. In addition to the part songs, which were rendered in first-class style by the choir, several solos, &c, were contributed by well-known local artistes, these tending to enhance the evening's enjoyment. Miss Isa Moore was heard to much advantage in "The Calico Dress" and other numbers, for which encores were given in response to vociferous demands. The rich contralto voice of Miss Press was well suited with a trio of songs. In addition to their several songs which found favour with the audience, Messrs. Waugh and M'Anally rendered that well-known duet, "Excelsior," in rousing style. A couple of violin solos by Miss Malcolm showed an appreciative grasp of technique and sympathy with the instrument. Miss Mia Napier and Miss Smith, who acted as accompanists, performed their often under-estimated duties in creditable style. A pleasing variety was introduced by the elocutionary efforts of Messrs. A. D. Carson and J. Johnston, who fully maintained their deservedly high reputation in this direction. The concert as a whole reflected great credit on the conductor, Mr. Alf. Brown, who has spared no effort in the training of the choir, and the energetic hon. secretary, Mr. David Ervine, whose arrangements were perfect.

Rademon.—A very successful meeting in connection with the Rademon Total Abstinence Society was held in the Schoolroom on Friday evening, 3rd April. A Reciting Competition had been announced, and this being a novelty in the neighbourhood, proved very attractive. The audience filled the school to overflowing, many of the young men having to be satisfied with standing-room about the door. Mr. E. A. Atkinson of the Irish Temperance League, attended as judge, and discharged the delicate duty to the entire satisfaction of all present. Four prizes were offered, two silver medals and two books. The children of the Reciting Class, conducted throughout the winter by the Rev. J. J. Magill were the competitors, and their ability was tried in Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade." The following nineteen boys and girls took part:—Sarah J. Robinson, Rachel Spratt, Sarah Alexander, Ellen Dunn, Lizzie Dunn, Sarah Spratt, Matilda Dunn, John Robinson, John Spratt, Bob Kennedy, James M'Clurg, John Pentland, Tom Robinson, Hugh Spratt, George Steedman, Wm. Pentland, Hugh Robinson, John M'Cormick, Andrew Patterson. The award of the judge gave the Silver Medals to Sarah J. Robinson and John Robinson; the books to Rachel Spratt and John Spratt. The prizes were gracefully handed to the successful competitors by Mrs. Magill. At the close of the contest, two of the young people stepped forward, and, in the name of the Class, presented to Mr. Magill two valuable works, Drummond's "Studies in Christian Doctrine" and Wells' "New Worlds for Old," in recognition of their regard for him as their teacher and of his work on behalf of Temperance in the district. Songs were tastefully rendered at intervals during the evening by Miss Morrison, Miss Stewart, Misses Robinson, Miss Close, Miss Alexander, Miss Spratt and Mr. H. Morrison. An eloquent address was given by Mr. E. A. Atkinson. The chairman brought the meeting to a close after thanking all who had assisted him during the winter, and announcing that the work would be resumed on the first Friday evening of October.

Bible Knowledge in our Sunday Schools.—The Association's Sunday School Committee spent much time a year ago debating plans for advancing Bible knowledge in our schools. This resulted in a list of subjects being selected in which teachers were asked to train scholars, and an examination of the work done being arranged for the year ended March, 1908. Several schools united in the scheme and the results in every case have been highly satisfactory, awards (certificates) being made in most instances in much larger numbers than anticipated, the answering on the part of the scholars being creditable to both them and their teachers. The Rev. A. O. Ashworth, Convener of the Committee, intimates that a new scheme is being provided for the current year, and in view of the great interest awakened in this matter it is thought a larger number of schools will participate.

Unity Guild.—The Fifth Meeting of the Session was held in the York Street Lecture Hall, on Wednesday, March 18th, and about 80 members and friends were present. The chair was occupied by the Rev. A. O. Ashworth, and a Lecture given by Dr. Mellone on "Trade Unions and Strikes." In the course of his address, Dr. Mellone said that to understand what a Trade Union is we should know something of its history. Originally a Trade Union was nothing but a friendly society and this had always been one of the chief reasons of its existence, but circumstances from time to time had involved the Union in other duties, such as the consideration of the conditions of labour with a view to health; the regulation of wages and of the hours of labour in the workers' interests; and the organising of strikes.

In respect of the first three of these duties, Trade Unions had done good and necessary work. They had been the means of checking the tendency of the stronger side, as represented by the employers to dictate its own terms. But in regard to strikes, the results had been of a more doubtful character. Strikes were an evil, though sometimes a necessary evil, but in no case should they be entered upon without the cost having been counted and the issues involved clearly understood by the workers themselves. Regard should be had to the state of public opinion, and the methods adopted should be similar to those of the Matchmakers' Union in the famous dispute with Bryant & May's, or to those of the Railway Servants' Society in the recent dispute in England.

In the discussion that followed, Mr. Jackson said that the weakness of a Trade Union lay in its failure to distinguish between the competent and the comparatively incompetent workman in the rate of wages, and in its utter disregard for the general effect of strikes upon the community at large. But the Rev. H. J. Rossington pointed out that all that Trade Unions did was to fix the minimum and not the maximum rate of wage, and that they had frequently been the means of preventing strikes.

The Rev. J. A. Kelly expressed himself in favour of compulsory arbitration boards for the settlement of trade dispute, but Dr. Mellone in his concluding remarks thought that arbitration should be left free.

Mr. Robinson and Mr. Yates also took part in the discussion. A vote of thanks to the lecturer was proposed by Mr. Hugh Hunter, seconded by Mr. Martin, and carried unanimously.

A School Hymn.

Thou, Father, art our heavenly Friend,
Tender, loving, true;
To Thee our purest thoughts ascend,
All our good deeds too.
We cannot praise Thee as we ought
Unless the heart be there;
The noblest deed, the purest thought,
Is the truest prayer.

To every life Thou givest grace
Best to do Thy will;
Oh! may we utter nothing base,
May we do no ill.
As ever, Father, in Thy sight
May all our actions be;
Then all we do will be most right,
Holy, true, and free.

Oh! better than the best that seems
Is our kindest thought,
Oh! fairer than our fairest dreams
Deeds with goodness fraught;
Then grant us, Father, all our days
To make our service Thine;
The kindest word will be Thy praise,
Love the prayer divine.

FREDERIC THOMAS.

Duty puts a blue sky over the head, into which the skylark happiness goes forever singing. *Lamartine.*

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